

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-13 and 18-26 are pending in the present application, Claims 7 and 18 having been amended, and Claims 25 and 26 having been added. Support for the present amendments is found, for example, in the previously filed substitute specification at page 5, lines 22-23, page 13, line 21 to page 14, line 20, and page 20, lines 7-23. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 7-13 and 18-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Alcorn et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,988,138, hereinafter “Alcorn”).

The response to arguments section at page 2 of the outstanding Office Action indicates that the Office is taking the position that the guest speaker/subject matter expert referred to in Alcorn is an unregistered user because the guest speaker/subject matter expert is not a registered student or instructor of the class. To more clearly describe and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded by Applicants as the invention, the independent claims are amended to further describe the unregistered user.

Amended Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, “providing anonymous unregistered attendees authority to view a limited subset of portions of the virtual events.” Alcorn does not disclose or suggest these elements of amended Claim 1.

Column 19, lines 25-28 of Alcorn, does not state that the guest speakers and subject matter experts are anonymous. On the contrary, Alcorn describes user management area 2416, which allows creation of a user entry by entering personal information such as name, address, etc., and a user name and password. A role of the user is set at this time, which may be a student, faculty, staff, alumni, *guest*, etc. The guest speakers are known to the system

prior to them interacting with the class. Thus, guests are not anonymous. The guests are known.

Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion that the guest speakers in Alcorn have authority to view a limited subset of portions of the virtual events. Rather, the guest speakers would appear to have full access to the “virtual classroom” described at col. 19 of Alcorn.

Furthermore, in non-limiting embodiments of the claimed invention, anonymity allows public access to be provided for limited aspects of a virtual event so that individuals are able to determine whether the virtual event is one in which they should attend.¹ The substitute specification goes on to explain how in the non-limiting embodiment a user can register (i.e., become a registered user) subsequent to the anonymous limited viewing.²

Thus, Alcorn does not disclose or suggest the claimed “providing anonymous unregistered attendees authority to view a limited subset of portions of the virtual events.”

In view of the above-noted distinctions, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 7 (and any claims dependent thereon) patentably distinguish over Alcorn. Claim 18 recites elements analogous to those of Claim 7. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 patentably distinguishes over Alcorn for at least the reasons stated for Claim 7.

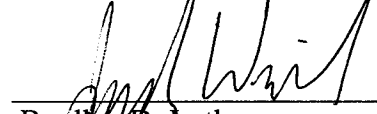
¹ Substitute specification, page 5, line 22 to page 6, line 1.

² Substitute specification, page 6, lines 2-4.

Accordingly, in light of the previous discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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